

**ELY DISTRICT APPROVED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**AUGUST 2008**

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## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This section contains background information on the planning process and sets the stage for the information that is presented in the rest of the document. There are nine main discussions in this section. They are:

- Purpose of and Need for the Plan
- Planning Area and Maps
- Notice of Modifications
- Legislative Constraints
- Planning Process
- Related Plans
- Public Involvement
- Management Plan Implementation
- Plan Evaluation/Adaptive Management

Section 102 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act directs the BLM to prepare land use plans that serve as the basis for all activities that occur on BLM-administered lands. "The national interest will be best realized if the public lands and their resources are periodically and systematically inventoried and their present and future use is projected through a land use planning process coordinated with other Federal and State planning efforts." Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act requires that "the Secretary shall, with public involvement ... develop, maintain, and when appropriate, revise land use plans."

Across the country, the first generation of BLM land use plans was prepared in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Within the Ely District Office, one RMP and one Management Framework Plan (MFP) were prepared in this timeframe. In 1996, management of the Caliente Resource Area was transferred from the Las Vegas District Office to the Ely District Office. The Caliente Resource Area also was covered by an MFP. Even with periodic amendments, these three 15- to 20 year-old plans no longer meet the management needs of the Ely District Office. This RMP is expected to serve the management direction needs of the Ely District Office for the foreseeable future. The Approved Ely RMP would remain in effect as long as the management direction contained in the Plan is valid in light of scientific understanding and current management needs. It is BLM policy to evaluate RMPs every 5 years to determine if a plan revision or amendment is needed in response to changing conditions over time. The Plan would be updated and amended periodically to maintain its effectiveness as long as practical. When the Plan reaches the end of its effective life, a new plan would be prepared. The life of an RMP is typically about 20 years.

### Purpose of and Need for the Plan

The purpose of the Approved RMP is to provide direction for management of renewable and nonrenewable resources found on public lands within the Ely planning area and to guide decision-making for future site-specific actions. The Approved RMP will direct the Ely District Office in resource management activities including leasing minerals such as oil and gas; construction of electrical transmission lines, gas pipelines, and roads; grazing management; recreation and outfitting; preserving and restoring wildlife habitat; selling or



## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

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exchanging lands for the benefit of local communities; military use of the planning area; and conducting other activities that require land use planning decisions.

The need for the action is to consolidate, update, and establish appropriate goals, objectives, management actions, priorities, and procedures, within a multiple-use management context, for all BLM public land resource programs administered by the Ely District Office. The RMP is needed to provide a land use plan consistent with current laws, regulations, and policies, and to update resource management direction to allow Ely District Office managers to meet nationwide BLM goals and objectives and to ensure their actions are consistent with current BLM policy. The Approved RMP also is needed to facilitate implementation of the Great Basin Restoration Initiative, a regional initiative to implement actions to maintain or improve ecological health at the landscape scale.

This Approved Resource Management Plan provides direction and guidance for the management of approximately 11.5 million acres of public land and minerals located in Lincoln, White Pine, and a portion of Nye counties in eastern Nevada that are administered by the BLM Ely District Office. The Ely Approved RMP consolidates the Schell and Caliente Management Framework Plans approved in 1983 and 1981, respectively, the Egan Resource Management Plan approved in 1987, the Egan Resource Management Plan Oil and Gas Leasing Amendment and Record of Decision, May 1994, and the Approved Caliente Management Framework Plan Amendment and Record of Decision for the Management of Desert Tortoise Habitat, September 2000, and focuses on the principles of multiple use and sustained yield as prescribed by Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

Issues addressed during the formulation of the Approved RMP include maintenance and restoration of resiliency to disturbed ecological systems within the portion of the Great Basin administered by the Ely District Office, protection and management of habitats for special status species, upland and riparian habitat management, noxious weeds, commercial uses (including livestock grazing, mineral development, oil and gas leasing, rights-of-way, and communication use areas), Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, travel management, land disposal, and wild horses.

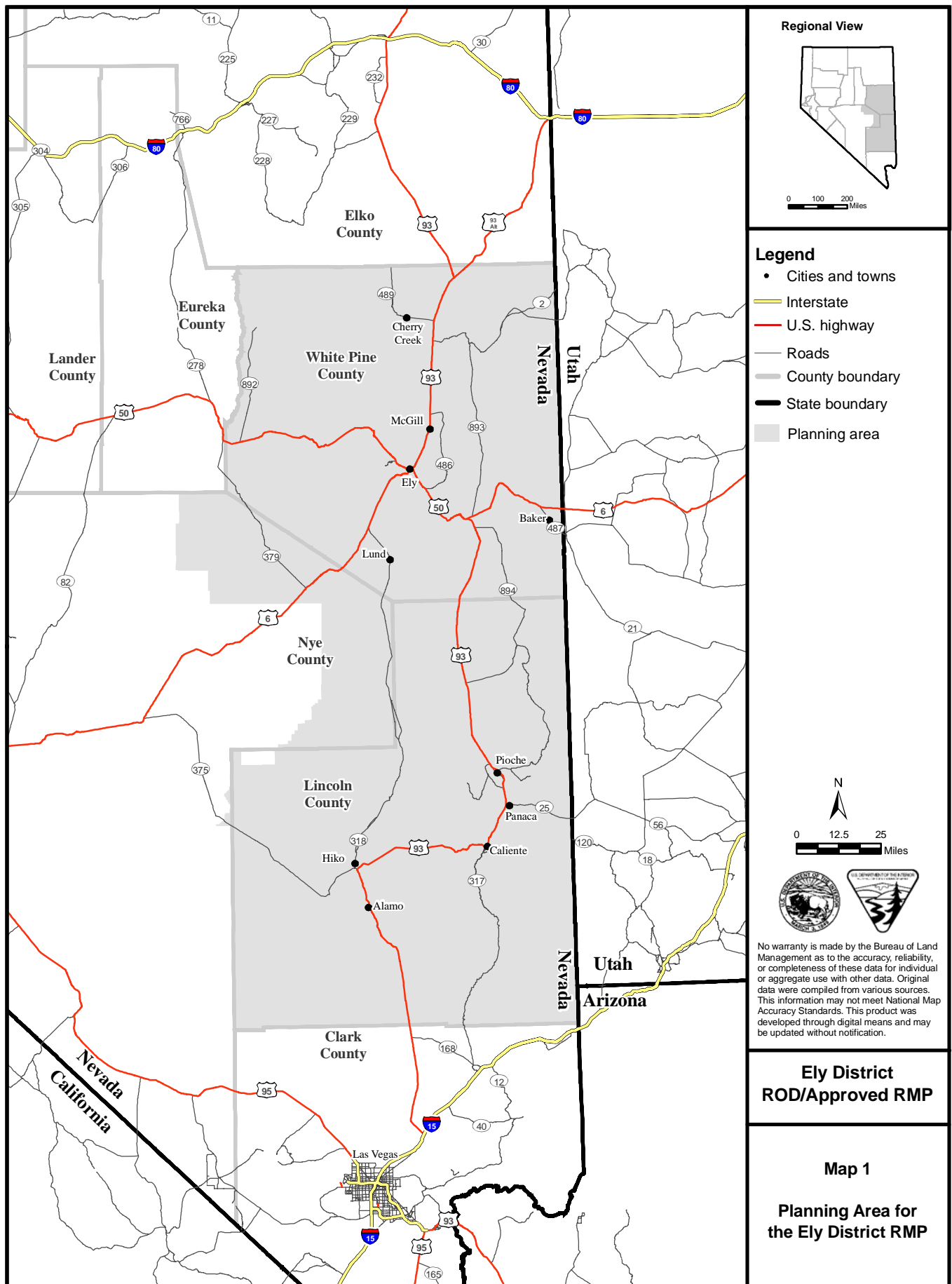
The Approved RMP primarily is based on the Proposed RMP alternative presented in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS (November 2007), and is a compilation of those individual management actions from the other four alternatives, plus unique management actions, that the Ely District Office believes will best meet its obligations for multiple use management of the resources found within the planning area. Management actions in the Proposed RMP were developed through consideration of the planning criteria, public protests, BLM policy especially as presented in the Land Use Planning Handbook, the professional judgment of the staff in the Ely District Office, and comments from a wide array of users of the planning area. The management actions that are presented in the Approved RMP are based on those in the Proposed RMP; changes made in response to protest letters received, governor's consistency review, and the Biological Opinion are discussed within this document.

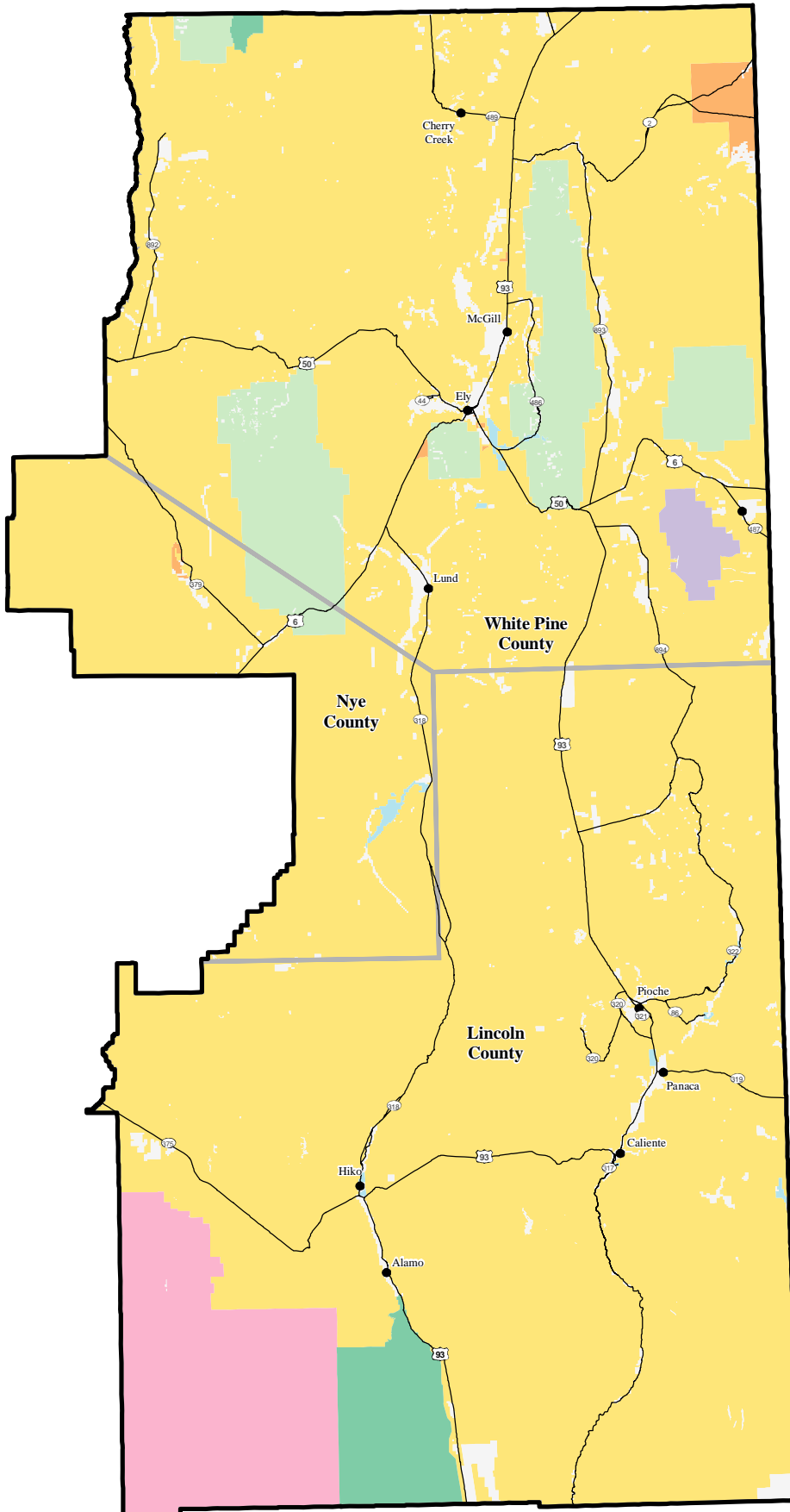
## **Planning Area and Maps**

The planning area for the Ely RMP/EIS consists of the geographic area within which the BLM Ely District Office would make land management decisions (see **Map 1**). The planning area includes all lands regardless of jurisdiction; however, the BLM would only make decisions on lands that fall under BLM's jurisdiction. **Map 2** shows the land status within the planning area. The “decision area” consists of public lands administered by the Ely District Office in White Pine, Lincoln, and a portion of Nye counties in east-central Nevada. The “decision area” also includes those private lands on which there is “split estate,” and the BLM continues to manage subsurface mineral commodities. The planning area measures approximately 230 miles (north-south) by 115 miles (east-west). **Table 1** summarizes the land administration/ownership in the planning area.

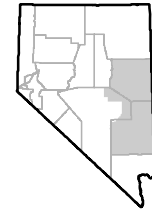
**Table 1**  
**Planning Area Land Administration/Ownership Status**

<b>Administration/Ownership</b>	<b>Acres</b>
U.S. Department of the Interior	
Bureau of Land Management	11,463,419
National Park Service	77,128
Bureau of Indian Affairs	73,555
Fish and Wildlife Service	282,995
U.S. Department of Agriculture	
Forest Service	825,136
U.S. Department of Defense	778,010
State of Nevada	34,131
Private	392,978
Total	13,927,352



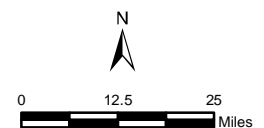


#### Regional View



#### Legend

- Cities and Towns
- Roads
- County boundary
- Land Status**
  - Orange: Bureau of Indian Affairs
  - Yellow: BLM
  - Light Gray: Private
  - Pink: Department of Defense
  - Green: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
  - Purple: National Park Service
  - Light Blue: State of Nevada
  - Light Green: U.S. Forest Service



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**Ely District  
ROD/Approved RMP**

**Map 2**

**Land Status within  
the Planning Area**

## **Notice of Modifications**

As a result of protests on the Proposed RMP/Final EIS and continuing internal review, BLM made two substantive modifications to the Proposed Plan. Discussions associated with the Management Decisions in the Approved RMP have been adjusted to reflect these modifications.

### ***Hendry's Creek/Rock Animal Corral ACEC***

To resolve an issue identified within a protest letter, BLM modified management actions in the Approved RMP to reflect not designating the Hendry's Creek/Rock Animal Corral ACEC, but maintaining the Rock Animal Corral Archaeological Site under previous management. The Proposed RMP/Final EIS proposed the designation of 3,650 acres as the Hendry's Creek/Rock Animal Corral ACEC for the protection of prehistoric values. After review, BLM found that this location did not require special management as an ACEC to protect its relevant and important values. Protection of those values could be achieved by maintaining the designation as an archaeological site with restrictions on fluid and solid minerals, locatable minerals and mineral material sales on the 160 acres contained in the current special designation. This adjustment is not considered a significant change since the area will still be managed to protect the relevant and important values of the site, and the effects of managing these lands to protect these values were adequately projected in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS released in November, 2007.

### ***Pony Express Trail***

The Visual Resource Management classification in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS was mapped in error for the Pony Express Trail. As noted in decision CR-6, the area of direct effect around national historic trails is 1 mile from the centerline. Acreages of Visual Resource Management classifications (Class 1 through Class 4) have been adjusted in the Approved RMP based on these revisions. This adjustment is not considered a significant change since the adjustments to the Visual Resource Management associated with the Pony Express trail would be consistent with previously defined areas of direct effect.

The following clarifications and minor corrections made to the information included in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS are reflected in the Approved RMP.

- BLM review determined six of the seven implementation decisions indicated in the Proposed RMP were not implementation-level decisions but planning-level decisions. The Approved RMP has been modified to reflect this determination; however, no associated changes were made to management action wording.
- Management actions associated with species listed in the Biological Opinion (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2008) were adjusted based on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Section 7 consultation. These management actions are now consistent with the Biological Opinion, included as Appendix D of the Approved RMP.

- Clarifications and editorial changes associated with adjusting titles and language from the Proposed RMP/Final EIS to conform with the desired Approved RMP format.
- Updated information associated with lands conveyed to White Pine County in accordance with the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation and Development Act of 2006.
- The mitigation measures adopted into the Approved RMP are Proposed Mitigation Measure 1, modified and included under Management Action FM-7; Proposed Mitigation Measure 2, included in Management Action REC-4; and Proposed Mitigation Measure 5, Option 1, included under Management Action LR-24. These approved mitigation measures are consistent with BLM authority.

## **Legislative Constraints**

The BLM administers public lands within a framework of numerous laws. The most comprehensive of these is the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. All BLM policies, procedures, and management actions must be consistent with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the other laws that govern use of the public lands. In the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Congress established the principle of “multiple use” management, defined as “management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people.” In addition to the legislative and procedural agency guidance for the preparation of the Approved RMP, other initiatives and legislation have contributed to the scope and management direction for this document.

### ***Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004***

On November 30, 2004, the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004 was signed into law. This legislation implements a comprehensive plan that balances the needs for infrastructure development, recreation opportunities, and conservation of natural resources and public lands in Lincoln County, Nevada.

### ***White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006***

On December 20, 2006, the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006 was signed into law. This legislation implements a comprehensive plan that balances the needs for infrastructure development, recreation opportunities, and conservation of natural resources and public lands in White Pine County, Nevada. The White Pine Act is modeled after the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act, the Clark County Lands Act, and the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act.

### ***Resource Advisory Councils***

The Ely District Office receives input from two of the three Resource Advisory Councils in Nevada. The Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council helps advise the Ely District Office on public lands issues in White Pine County, while the Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council provides input for Lincoln and Nye counties. The Secretary of the Interior has approved standards and guidelines for rangeland health, off-highway vehicle use, and wild horses that were developed with the involvement of these two Resource Advisory Councils. The standards and guidelines are written to accomplish four fundamentals of rangeland health. The fundamentals are that:

- Watersheds are functioning properly;
- Ecological processes are functioning properly to support healthy biotic populations and communities;
- Water quality complies with state water quality requirements; and
- Habitats of protected species are functioning properly.

The terms and conditions of grazing permits and leases must result in meeting or making progress toward meeting these Resource Advisory Council standards. Thus, these Resource Advisory Council standards and guidelines constitute existing policy that has been incorporated into the Approved RMP without modification. While the standards and guidelines developed by the Northeastern Great Basin and Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Councils are not identical in terms of the resources addressed or their specific wording, the goals presented in the Approved RMP were developed to be consistent with both sets of standards.

## **Planning Process**

### ***Relationship to Federal, State, Local and Tribal plans, Other Stakeholder Relationships***

A multitude of laws, regulations, and policies, as well as land use planning documents, direct how the Ely District Office manages resources. Further, there are cooperative relationships that have been established with other federal, state, local, and tribal governments that manage lands and resources within the overall boundaries of the planning area. This entire body of relationships is too extensive to treat even in a summary manner in this document; however, certain relationships are key to understanding the management actions in the Approved RMP, and these are presented below. Fourteen federal, state, local, and tribal entities agreed to be formal Cooperating Agencies assisting in the preparation of the Ely Approved RMP.

### **Federal Agencies**

Parts of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and the entire Great Basin National Park are within the planning area. The Ely District Office, U.S. Forest Service, and National Park Service strive to achieve similar resource management goals on adjoining lands.

The Ely District Office also coordinates with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on decisions that may affect the National Wildlife Refuge System. All or portions of Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Pahranaagat National Wildlife Refuge, and Desert National Wildlife Range occur within the planning area.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (as amended). The BLM consults with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service whenever a federal project or action that the BLM funds, authorizes, or carries out may affect a listed species, or may adversely modify its designated critical habitat. The BLM and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have entered into an agreement to conduct programmatic consultations on RMPs. Programmatic consultations can provide the benefit of streamlining the consultation process while leading to a more landscape-based approach to consultations that can minimize the potential “piecemeal” effects that can occur when evaluating individual projects out of the context of the complete agency program. As part of this agreement, the BLM and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service developed a list of federally listed, proposed, and candidate species and BLM sensitive species that are addressed in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS and in the Biological Assessment. Based on information contained in the Biological Assessment and discussions held during consultation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has issued a formal Biological Opinion that includes terms and conditions to minimize impacts to federally listed, proposed, and candidate species (Appendix D). The Biological Opinion also includes conservation recommendations for BLM sensitive species.

Under the programmatic consultation process, once a specific project is developed that may adversely affect listed species, the Ely District Office will provide project-specific information that describes: 1) the proposed action and a map of the specific areas to be affected; 2) the species and designated critical habitat that may be affected; 3) the anticipated effects to listed species and their designated critical habitat that may result for the proposed actions; and 4) proposed measures to minimize potential effects of the action. Subsequently, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reviews the information and effects analysis provided for each proposed project and determines the anticipated incidental take for each action, at the project level, which may be a subset of the incidental take anticipated in the programmatic biological opinion.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service completes a response and this documentation is then physically attached (appended) to the programmatic biological opinion. The programmatic biological opinion, together with the appended documentation, fulfills the consultation requirements for implementation of both program-level and project-level actions.

Monitoring will be conducted, at least annually, by the Ely District Office and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that the effects analysis in the programmatic biological opinion is accurate. Monitoring would include a comprehensive review of how the program-level biological opinion is working and whether its implementing procedures are in compliance. During this review, the environmental baseline would be reviewed and updated as needed to account for unanticipated effects or the lack of anticipated effects. During this process it may be determined that the program-level biological opinion is functioning as anticipated and, therefore, activities should continue, or that adjustments should be made.



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The Ely District Office and U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service work jointly under a national memorandum of understanding on animal damage control, including predator and insect control.

The Ely District Office and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers work together on issues related to wetlands and stream crossings that require Section 404 permits.

The Ely District Office works with the Natural Resources Conservation Service on soil and water management issues, as well as other resource concerns.

The Ely District Office consults with the U.S. Geological Survey on mineral and water resources and research.

The Department of Defense utilizes much of the airspace above and has numerous surface activities in the planning area. The Ely District Office works with the Department of Defense through Nellis and Hill Air Force Bases and Fallon Naval Air Station on military overflights and surface uses.

### **State Agencies**

The Ely District Office and Nevada Department of Wildlife work closely on site-specific activities including wildlife habitat and population management, introduction or reintroduction of wildlife species, species recovery activities, vegetation monitoring and evaluation, and the installation of range, fish, and wildlife improvements. Coordination also occurs on the management of State Wildlife Management Areas that are adjacent to BLM-administered lands, and on review of mine plans of operation and NEPA compliance documents.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Nevada Natural Heritage Program works with the Ely District Office to maintain status and location information for BLM sensitive plant and animal species.

The Ely District Office and Nevada Division of State Parks consult on management of public land adjacent to state parks. Public lands also can be transferred to the state for park purposes under authority of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act.

The Ely District Office consults with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer prior to any activities that might adversely affect cultural resources. This consultation involves assessing the potential effects of proposed projects on cultural resources and developing appropriate mitigation measures when adverse impacts cannot be avoided.

The Nevada Division of Minerals manages oil and gas and geothermal development at the state level. The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection participates with the Ely District Office in joint bonding, review, and authorization of mine plans of operation. The Ely District Office works closely with these two agencies to avoid duplication in regulations, inspections, and approval of reclamation plans and attempts to minimize costs for mine operators, public, and government.

The Nevada BLM and Nevada Division of Environmental Protection work together to meet implementation requirements of the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act. A Memorandum of Understanding was executed between the agencies in September 2004 to coordinate water quality management efforts.

The Ely District Office, Nevada Department of Agriculture, and county governments cooperate on inventory, study, and management of noxious weeds, and on insect control.

The Ely District Office and Nevada Department of Transportation cooperate and coordinate land use activities and/or authorizations such as road rights-of-way, mineral material sources, communications sites, and other issues related to public highway safety.

The Nevada Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses works with the Ely District Office to maintain and ensure the proper management of wild horses.

### **Local Government**

The Ely District Office coordinates with a number of county agencies and organizations on mutual goals for resource management and land disposals for public purposes. Coordination includes county commissions, planning departments, soil and water conservation districts, weed control agencies, coordinated resource management steering committees, road/highway departments, and the Tri-County Group.

### **Tribal Governments**

The Ely District Office coordinates with affected or interested American Indian groups as required or recommended in the National Historic Preservation Act (1966), National Environmental Policy Act (1969), Archaeological Resources Protection Act (1979), Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990), executive orders on sacred sites (Executive Order 13007) and government-to-government consultation (Executive Order 13175), and Nevada BLM Instruction Memorandum on the consultation process (2005-008). The Ely District Office also would coordinate with appropriate tribal representatives in the early stages of activity planning or projects that may affect tribal interests, treaty rights, or traditional use areas.

### **Non-governmental Organizations**

To maximize restoration capability and success while achieving mutual goals, including implementation of the Great Basin Restoration Initiative, the Ely District Office has formed an external partnership with the Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition. This non-profit community-based partnership has approximately 90 members from businesses, organizations, government agencies, and individuals that represent agricultural, conservation, cultural, environmental, scientific, private enterprise, and other interests. The Nevada BLM and other federal agencies work with the Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition through a cooperative agreement to implement a variety of resource management activities on public land in eastern Nevada. In addition, the Ely District Office works cooperatively with the Great Basin Cooperative Ecological

## **Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan**

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Systems Study Unit to facilitate the implementation of research to assist in providing both baseline and other studies regarding potential alternative actions to maintain or restore the ecological health and resiliency of Great Basin landscapes within eastern Nevada.

### **Related Plans**

BLM planning regulations (43 Code of Federal Regulations 1610.3.2[a]) require that BLM resource management plans be consistent with officially approved or adopted resource-related plans of other federal, state, local, and tribal governments to the extent those plans are consistent with federal laws and regulations applicable to public lands. Plans formulated by federal, state, local, and tribal governments that relate to management of lands and resources have been reviewed and considered as the Ely Approved RMP has been developed.

#### ***State and Local Plans***

##### **State of Nevada**

- Natural Heritage Program, Lincoln County Rare Species List, 2002
- Natural Heritage Program, Nye County Rare Species List
- Natural Heritage Program, White Pine County Rare Species List, 2002
- Nevada State Parks, Beaver Dam State Park Development Plan, 1992
- Nevada State Parks, Cathedral Gorge State Park Development Plan, No Date
- Nevada State Parks, Cave Lake State Park Development Plan, 1990
- Nevada State Parks, Echo Canyon State Park Development Plan, 1990
- Nevada State Parks, Kershaw-Ryan State Park Development Plan, No Date
- Nevada State Parks, Spring Valley State Park Development Plan, 1992
- Nevada State Parks, Ward Charcoal Ovens State Historic Site Development Plan, 1991
- Nevada State Parks, 2002 SCORP Issues P-1 (Draft)
- State of Nevada, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, Wayne E. Kirch Wildlife Management Area Conceptual Management Plan, July 2000
- State of Nevada, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, Steptoe Valley Wildlife Management Area Conceptual Management Plan, January 2002
- State of Nevada, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Environmental Protection, Memorandum of Understanding for Water Quality Management Activities within the State of Nevada, September 2004
- State of Nevada, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Natural Heritage Program Scorecard, 2000
- State of Nevada, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Natural Resource Status Report, August 2002
- State of Nevada, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Water Resources, Southern Nevada Surface Water Data Network, 2002
- State of Nevada, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water Planning, State Water Plan, 1999

- State of Nevada, Department of Transportation, Transportation System Projects 2003-2012 – Lincoln County, 2002
- State of Nevada, Department of Transportation, Transportation System Projects 2003-2012 – Nye County, 2002
- State of Nevada, Department of Transportation, Transportation System Projects 2003-2012, White Pine County, 2002
- State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife, Bighorn Sheep Management Plan, 2001
- State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife, Conservation Assessment of Greater Sage-grouse and Sagebrush Habitats, 2004
- State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife, Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan for Nevada and Eastern California, 2004
- State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife, Lincoln County Elk Management Plan, July 1999
- State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife, Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Strategy, 2004
- State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife, Pahrangat Valley Native Fishes Management Plan, 1999
- State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife, White Pine County Elk Management Plan, March 1999
- State of Nevada, Division of Environmental Protection, Nevada's 2002 303(d.) Impaired Waters List, October 2002
- State of Nevada, Division of Environmental Protection, Nevada Smoke Management Program, July 1999
- State of Nevada, Division of Environmental Protection, Solid Waste Management Program
- State of Nevada, Revised Nevada Bat Conservation Plan, 2006
- State of Nevada, Conservation Agreement and Conservation Strategy for Bonneville Cutthroat Trout, 2006

**Mohave County, Arizona**

- Mohave County, Arizona, General Plan, March 1995, Revised January 2002

**Clark County, Nevada**

- Clark County Master Plan, Clark County Federal Lands Element, Adopted July 1, 1997
- Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, September 2000

**Eureka County, Nevada**

- Eureka County Master Plan, June 2000
- Eureka County Natural Resource Management Ordinance, November 1996

**Lincoln County, Nevada**

- Alamo Area Land Use Planning Project, 1990
- Lincoln County/City of Caliente, Rachel Area Conceptual Development Plan, 1989
- Lincoln County Master Plan, Revision, 2006
- Lincoln County Economic Development Strategy 2005
- Lincoln County Strategic Marketing Plan, 2005
- Lincoln County Capital Improvements Plan and Program, 2001

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- Lincoln County Planned Unit Development Ordinance, 2002
- Lincoln County Public Land and Natural Resource Management Plan, 1997
- Lincoln County Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plan, 2006
- Lincoln County Solid Waste Management Plan, 2000
- Needs Assessment for Lincoln County, 2005
- Water Plan for Lincoln County, 2001

### **Nye County, Nevada**

- Nye County, Policy Plan for Public Lands, 1985

### **White Pine County, Nevada**

- Public Lands Identified for Transfer from the BLM to Local Government for Community Expansion, 1998, Appendix 2, White Pine County Land Use Plan
- White Pine County Annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, August 2005
- White Pine County, Emergency Operations Plan, 1994
- White Pine County, Land Use Plan, 1998
- White Pine County, Marketing Manual, August 1997
- White Pine County, McGill Highway Area Master Plan, August 2000
- White Pine County, Nevada Water Resources Plan, 1999
- White Pine County Open Space Plan, September 2005
- White Pine County, Public Land Use Plan, 1998
- White Pine County, Tourism Master Plan, August 2001
- White Pine County, Water Resources Plan, August 2006

### **Iron County, Utah**

- Iron County Master Plan, Utah – General Plan, Land Use Element, Digital Copy, 1981

### **Millard County, Utah**

- Millard County, Utah – General Plan, Federal and State Lands, No Date

### **Tooele County, Utah**

- Tooele County, Utah – General Plan, November 1995

### **Washington County, Utah**

- New Harmony Valley General Plan, Washington County, Utah, July 1997
- Washington County, Utah – General Plan, October 2002
- Washington County, Utah, Wilderness Recommendation – Cougar Canyon Wilderness Area, October 1991

**City of Caliente, Nevada**

- City of Caliente Master Plan, 1992
- City of Caliente, Wellhead Protection Plan, October 2002
- Fiscal and Capital Improvement Program, Caliente Public Utilities, 1990

**City of Ely, Nevada**

- City of Ely Master Plan – Business Plan Element, May 1999
- City of Ely, Wellhead Protection Plan, April 2002
- Ely Master Plan, 1999

***Federal Plans***

**Department of Energy**

- U.S. Department of Energy, Yucca Mountain Final EIS

**National Park Service**

- Great Basin National Park Final General Management Plan, Development Concept Plans, EIS, Natural Resources Management
- Great Basin National Park RMP, Updated 2000

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

- Big Spring Spinedace Recovery Implementation Plan, 1999 (Draft)
- Big Spring Spinedace Recovery Plan, 1993
- Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan, 1994
- Pacific States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan, 1986
- Pahrangat National Wildlife Refuge Wildland Fire Management Plan, 2001
- Railroad Valley Springfish Recovery Plan, 1997
- Recovery Plan for the Aquatic and Riparian Species of Pahrangat Valley, 1998
- Ruby Lake Management Plan, September 1986
- Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge Fire Management Plan, 2001
- Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge Water Management Plan, May 1988
- Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Recovery Plan, 2002
- White River Spinedace Recovery Plan, 1994

**U.S. Forest Service, Humboldt National Forest**

- Humboldt National Forest Land and RMP, 1986
- Amendment #1 – Humboldt National Forest Land and RMP, December 1989
- Amendment #2 – Humboldt National Forest Land and RMP, July 1990
- Amendment #3 – Humboldt National Forest Land and RMP
- Amendment #4 – Humboldt National Forest Land and RMP

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- Amendment #5 – Humboldt National Forest Land and RMP
- Amendment #6 – Humboldt National Forest Land and RMP, August 1996
- Amendment #7 – Humboldt National Forest Land and RMP, November 1998

### ***Tribal Plans***

The Ely District Office communicated on a government-to-government basis with five tribal groups (Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, Ely Shoshone Tribe, Moapa Band of Paiutes, Yomba Shoshone Tribe, and Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation), the first four of which were formal cooperating agencies on the RMP/EIS, regarding any plans or policies that should be reviewed for consistency. No planning documents were provided for this review.

### ***Consistency with Other Programs, Plans, and Policies***

During the development of the Ely RMP/EIS, the planning documents cited above were consulted and considered as alternatives were developed. Parallel RMP-level decisions currently in place on adjoining state and federal lands, including some in Utah and Arizona, and local agency policies were reviewed for consistency. Management actions identified in the Approved RMP are substantially consistent with these federal, state, and local planning documents. Where the Approved RMP does not contain a management action that corresponds with one contained in another agency's planning document (or vice versa), the Approved RMP was judged to be consistent with the other document. While there is not uniformity in land management practices or goals across the region (i.e., they are not identical), management actions are compatible with adjoining jurisdictions, and there is no apparent conflict. Key areas of consistency are highlighted in the following sections, and minor inconsistencies also have been noted.

### **Federal Plans and Policies**

Wildland fire management by the Ely District Office is directed by the Ely Fire Management Plan. It was found that fire management for adjoining BLM District Offices may be inconsistent in certain locations. For example, an area in the planning area may be identified as having "few constraints" (requirements) for fire suppression, while the adjoining area in another BLM planning area may be identified as "full suppression." However, the Ely Fire Management Plan has been in effect for several years and has proven to be compatible with fire management on adjoining units overall; therefore, no conflicts are foreseeable.

### **State Plans and Policies**

The Nevada Division of State Lands currently is preparing an update to the Statewide Public Lands Policy Plan. The Ely District Office has reviewed the preliminary public land management goals identified for the state plan and has found them to be consistent with the Approved RMP. The state goals would be revisited once they are finalized.

The Nevada State Water Plan states: "Since most water supply sources originate on watersheds managed by federal agencies, their participation in watershed planning and management is essential" (Nevada

Division of Water Planning 1999). The Ely District Office intends to involve the Nevada Division of Water Planning in the development of watershed restoration strategies, and thus, the ROD and Approved RMP is consistent with the state water plan. The Approved RMP also includes a decision to manage designated wellhead protection areas.

The Nevada Smoke Management Program includes the following goal: "Acknowledge the role of fire in Nevada and allow the use of fire under controlled conditions to maintain healthy ecological systems while meeting the requirements of the Clean Air Act" (Nevada Division of Environmental Protection 1999). Wildland fire use requires an annual permit (including an initial or revised burn plan and map), as well as daily evaluation of the fire to: "determine if the conditions meet the prescription of the permitted burn, and that ambient air quality standards are not being violated." Thus, prescribed and wildland fire use as tools in the restoration of watersheds would require coordination with the state in those areas where the Ely Fire Management Plan allows management options other than full suppression.

### **County Plans and Policies**

Overall, the management actions contained in the ROD and Approved RMP are consistent with the planning documents of the three directly affected counties, seven neighboring counties, and two major communities (Ely and Caliente). These jurisdictions have developed a wide range of planning goals addressing topics from recreation to livestock grazing to mineral development. However, the topic that was of greatest interest to the three cooperating counties (White Pine, Lincoln, and Nye) and the City of Caliente during preparation of the RMP/EIS was the future availability of BLM-administered land for economic development and community expansion. These goal statements are presented below.

- White Pine County – "Support the sale or exchange of public land which increases private land holdings in the County available for agriculture, industrial and community development." "Encourage BLM to amend its Resource Management Plan to reflect County goals and implementation strategies for public land and specific parcels identified for transfer to accommodate community expansion needs" (White Pine County 1998).
- Lincoln County – "Lincoln County should help facilitate the exchange of federal (BLM) lands into private ownership for both residential and industrial uses." "The predominance of public lands restricts community expansion and economic development. The county is identifying public lands desired for economic development and/or community expansion" (Lincoln County 2001).
- Nye County – "Increase opportunities for local economic development by selectively increasing the amount of privately owned and locally managed land within the county except for lands with high recreational, wildlife, mineral, and other public values." "Disposal of public lands in a timely fashion to allow the expansion of existing communities, the possible creation of new ones and the construction of needed residential and commercial facilities" (Nye County 1985).
- City of Caliente – "Those lands which could provide needed area for growth adjacent to the city should be identified and pursued for acquisition from the Bureau of Land Management" (City of Caliente 1992).



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Two areas where county planning documents are inconsistent with the Approved RMP also were identified. These are presented below.

- Lincoln County – “No additional wetlands shall be designated in Lincoln County. Any wetlands in existence shall not be used by public agencies managing them to harm or impede agriculture or other economic activities in Lincoln County whatsoever” (Lincoln County 1997). Wetland identification and management planning would be a component of the watershed analysis process. It is anticipated that wetlands will be managed for resource values other than agriculture or economic development.
- Lincoln County – On June 20, 1994, the Lincoln County Commission passed a resolution stating that it is “adamantly opposed ... to land exchanges or transfers that take land either off of county tax rolls or place land into a tax exempt status” (Lincoln County Commission Resolution #1994-10). The Approved RMP will allow the acquisition of land, which could result in a decrease in the number of acres of land on the county tax rolls.

### **Public Involvement**

The BLM will continue to actively seek the views of the public using techniques such as news releases, mass mailing, and website postings to ask for participation and to inform the public of news and ongoing project proposals, site-specific planning, and opportunities and timeframes for comment. The public is encouraged to actively participate in implementing these decisions by doing the following:

- Requesting that their name be added to project or NEPA mailing lists by sending or calling in a request (via mail or phone) to the following address/phone number:

Ely District Office  
HC 33 Box 33500  
702 North Industrial Way  
Ely, Nevada 89301  
775 289-1800

- Talking with a manager or staff member by calling or emailing;
- Monitoring BLM's website ([www.nv.blm.gov](http://www.nv.blm.gov)) for project proposals or information; and/or
- Attending public meetings and provide written comments on site-specific project proposals.

The BLM will continue to coordinate and consult, both formally and informally, with various Federal and state agencies, Indian Tribes, local agencies and officials, and communities and groups interested and involved in the management of public lands in the Ely District.

## **Management Plan Implementation**

### ***Priorities***

Land use plan decisions are generally implemented or become effective upon approval of the RMP and signing of the Record of Decision. These decisions include the goals, objectives, land use allocation decisions and all special designations.

Management actions in this Approved RMP that require additional site-specific project planning as funding becomes available, will require further environmental analysis, completion of Section 106 compliance for cultural resources, and Section 7 consultation. Decisions to implement site-specific projects will be subject to administrative review at the time such decisions are made.

The BLM will continue to involve and collaborate with the public during implementation of this Approved RMP. Opportunities to become involved in plan implementation will include development of partnerships and community-based citizen groups. The BLM invites citizens and user groups interested in the management of the Ely District to become actively involved in the implementation of plan decisions. The BLM and citizens can collaboratively develop site-specific goals and objectives that mutually benefit public land resources, local communities, and the people who live, work, or recreate on public lands.

### ***Costs***

The costs associated with the implementation of this plan will be developed in association with future site-specific plans.

## **Plan Evaluation and Adaptive Management**

### ***Plan Monitoring***

Monitoring is an essential component of natural resources management, because it provides information on the relative success of resource management plans and specific management strategies. This importance is recognized in the BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), which provides direction for monitoring. "Land use plan monitoring is the process of (1) tracking the implementation of land use planning decisions (implementation monitoring) and (2) collecting data/information necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of land use planning decisions (effectiveness monitoring)." Implementation monitoring will be completed annually and will be documented in a tracking log or report, which will be available to the public. Effectiveness monitoring strategies will be developed as allowable uses and management actions are implemented. "The monitoring process should collect information in the most cost-effective manner and may involve sampling and remote sensing. Monitoring could be so costly as to be prohibitive if it is not carefully and reasonably designed."

Monitoring for each resource program is outlined in the "Management Decisions" section of the Approved Plan. If monitoring shows land use plan actions or best management practices are not effective, the BLM

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may modify or adjust management without amending or revising the plan as long as assumptions and impacts disclosed in the EIS analysis remain valid, and broad-scale goals and objectives are not changed. Where the BLM considers taking or approving actions that will alter or not conform to the overall direction of the Approved Plan, the BLM will prepare a plan amendment or revision and environmental analysis of appropriate scope.

### ***Land Use Plan Evaluations***

Plan evaluation is a crucial part of the implementation process. Evaluation will determine:

1. If decisions are relevant to current issues;
2. If decisions are effective in achieving desired outcomes;
3. If decisions need to be revised;
4. If any decisions need to be removed from further consideration; and
5. If any new areas/issues need decisions.

Evaluations may identify resource needs and means for correcting deficiencies and addressing issues through plan maintenance, amendments, or new starts.

### ***Adaptive Management***

The Interior Departmental Manual 516 DM 4.16 defines adaptive management as “a system of management practices based on clearly identified outcomes, monitoring to determine if management actions are meeting outcomes and, if not, facilitating management changes that would best ensure that outcomes are met or re-evaluate the outcomes.” The Ely District Office recognizes that specific knowledge regarding natural resource systems is sometimes uncertain and in those situations, adaptive management is the preferred management method.

Adaptive management is a formal, systematic, and rigorous approach to learning from the results of management actions, accommodating change, and improving management. It involves synthesizing existing knowledge, exploring alternative actions, and making explicit forecasts about their results. Management actions and monitoring programs are carefully designed to generate reliable feedback and clarify the reasons underlying results. Actions and objectives are then adjusted based on this feedback and improved understanding. In addition, decisions, actions, and results are carefully documented and communicated to others, so that knowledge gained through experience is passed on rather than lost when individuals move or leave the organization.

Goals, objectives, special designations, and allocations could not be changed through adaptive management. Plan amendments would be required to change these decisions. Implementation or activity level decisions could be adapted. Future activity level plans would follow NEPA procedures and involve the public.